

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks

james wood

The Enduring Insight of The Broken Estate: Essays on Literature and Belief by James Wood

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood is a collection that continues to resonate deeply with readers and critics alike. This intriguing book brings together a series of essays that explore the complex relationship between literature and faith, crafted by one of the most insightful literary critics of our time. James Wood's reflections on how belief shapes narrative and character not only illuminate classic and contemporary works but also invite readers to consider the moral and spiritual dimensions of storytelling in a modern context.

If you've ever wondered how literature can both reflect and challenge religious and philosophical ideas, or how an author's worldview seeps into their work, *The Broken Estate* offers a rich and rewarding journey. Available in the Modern Library Paperbacks series, this volume represents Wood's deft ability to combine rigorous criticism with accessible prose, making it a must-read for anyone interested in the intersection of faith, ethics, and literary art.

Who is James Wood and Why Does His Work Matter?

James Wood is a British literary critic known for his keen analytical eye and eloquent style. His essays consistently engage with literature on a level that goes beyond plot and style, delving into the deeper questions of human experience and belief. *The Broken Estate* showcases these qualities, highlighting Wood's unique perspective on the ways literature interacts with faith and doubt.

Unlike many critics who maintain a purely academic distance, Wood approaches literature with a sense of moral seriousness. His commentary often reflects a personal engagement with the texts, which gives his essays a warmth and immediacy that many readers appreciate. This makes *The Broken Estate* particularly compelling for those who want criticism that feels alive and relevant.

Exploring the Themes of Literature and Belief

At the heart of *The Broken Estate* is the exploration of how literature

grappling with belief – in God, in morality, and in the human condition. Wood argues that literature can serve as a kind of spiritual inquiry, a way to wrestle with doubts and certainties alike.

Faith and Doubt in Literary Narrative

One of the most fascinating aspects of *The Broken Estate* essays is Wood's treatment of faith and doubt as narrative engines. He examines works by authors such as Graham Greene, Flannery O'Connor, and Dostoevsky, showing how their characters' crises of belief often drive the plot and deepen the emotional impact.

Wood doesn't shy away from the complexities here. He acknowledges that literature does not always affirm faith; sometimes it portrays belief as fragile or broken – hence the title, *The Broken Estate*. This nuanced approach helps readers appreciate the tension and ambiguity that make these stories resonate on a profound level.

Morality and the Role of the Writer

Another key theme is the moral responsibility of the writer. Wood suggests that great literature often functions as a form of ethical exploration. Writers engage with questions of right and wrong, not in preachy ways, but through the lived experiences of their characters.

In his essays, Wood praises authors who maintain a "moral seriousness" without resorting to dogmatism. He sees this balance as vital in literature's ability to speak to readers across different backgrounds and beliefs. *The Broken Estate* thus becomes a meditation on how fiction can be both artistically brilliant and morally thoughtful.

Why Choose The Broken Estate Essays on Literature and Belief Modern Library Paperbacks?

For readers looking to deepen their understanding of literary criticism, this Modern Library edition is an excellent choice. The paperback format makes it accessible and easy to carry, while the collection itself offers a broad range of essays that cover different authors, genres, and themes.

Appeal to Both Casual Readers and Scholars

The Broken Estate is not just for academics. Wood's writing is lucid and engaging, inviting even casual readers to consider complex ideas. Whether you're a student of literature, a writer seeking inspiration, or simply someone who loves thoughtful essays, this book has much to offer.

Insightful Commentary on Classic and Contemporary Literature

Within the volume, you'll find essays that discuss everything from 19th-century Russian novels to 20th-century American fiction. This wide scope allows readers to see how themes of belief and morality transcend time periods and cultures, providing a deeper appreciation for the universality of literature's concerns.

How The Broken Estate Enhances Your Reading Experience

Reading The Broken Estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood can transform the way you approach novels and stories. Here's how:

- **Develops a deeper critical lens:** Wood's insights encourage readers to look beyond surface-level plot and identify underlying spiritual or moral questions.
- **Encourages empathy:** By focusing on characters grappling with faith or doubt, readers are invited to connect with diverse human experiences.
- **Stimulates thoughtful discussion:** The essays serve as excellent conversation starters for book clubs or academic settings.
- **Offers new perspectives on familiar works:** Readers often discover fresh angles on authors they thought they knew well.

Tips for Reading The Broken Estate

To get the most out of this collection, consider reading the essays alongside the primary texts Wood discusses. For example, pairing the essay on Flannery

O'Connor with one of her stories can enrich your understanding of her narrative techniques and thematic concerns.

Also, take your time with the essays. Wood's writing is dense with ideas, so pausing to reflect or jot down notes can deepen your engagement.

The Broken Estate in the Context of Modern Literary Criticism

James Wood's contribution with *The Broken Estate* fits neatly into a broader trend of literary criticism that values moral and philosophical inquiry. In an era where literary analysis can sometimes feel overly technical or detached, Wood's work reintroduces a humanistic approach.

His emphasis on belief—whether religious, ethical, or existential—reminds readers that literature often serves as a mirror to our deepest concerns. This human-centered criticism is especially relevant today, as readers seek books that address not only aesthetics but also the meaning of life.

Comparison with Other Literary Critics

While critics like Harold Bloom or Northrop Frye have focused on the symbolic and archetypal dimensions of literature, Wood's essays stand out for their combination of close reading with moral reflection. His approach is less about grand theories and more about the lived experience of reading.

This makes *The Broken Estate* a valuable addition to any reader's library, offering a perspective that balances intellectual rigor with emotional insight.

Where to Find The Broken Estate Essays on Literature and Belief Modern Library Paperbacks James Wood

Thanks to the Modern Library's commitment to keeping important literary works accessible, *The Broken Estate* is widely available in paperback. You can find it through major bookstores, online retailers, and often in libraries.

For those interested in building a collection of essential literary criticism, this volume is a smart investment. Its enduring relevance and engaging style ensure it will be a go-to reference for years to come.

In exploring the multifaceted relationship between literature and belief, James Wood's *The Broken Estate* essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood offers readers a profound meditation on the moral and spiritual dimensions of storytelling. Whether you're a seasoned literary critic or a passionate reader, this book invites you to consider how faith, doubt, and morality shape the stories that move us. Through Wood's eloquent and thoughtful prose, the broken estate of literature is not a place of despair but a landscape rich with insight and meaning.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 'The Broken Estate: Essays on Literature and Belief' by James Wood about?

'The Broken Estate' is a collection of essays by James Wood that explores the relationship between literature and belief, examining how literature can reflect, challenge, and shape moral and religious ideas.

Who is James Wood, the author of 'The Broken Estate'?

James Wood is a renowned literary critic and writer known for his insightful analysis of literature and its connection to moral and philosophical questions.

What themes are explored in 'The Broken Estate'?

The essays explore themes such as faith, doubt, morality, the role of literature in society, and how belief systems influence literary interpretation.

Is 'The Broken Estate' suitable for readers without a background in literature or theology?

Yes, James Wood writes accessibly, making complex ideas about literature and belief understandable to general readers as well as scholars.

How does James Wood approach the topic of belief in his essays?

Wood approaches belief not just as religious faith but as a broader concept that includes doubt, skepticism, and the moral questions literature raises.

What kind of literary works does James Wood discuss in 'The Broken Estate'?

Wood discusses a wide range of literature, including works by classic and contemporary authors, to illustrate his points about literature and belief.

Why is 'The Broken Estate' included in the Modern Library Paperbacks series?

It is included because it is considered a significant contribution to literary criticism and thought, offering enduring insights into literature and its cultural impact.

How has 'The Broken Estate' been received by critics and readers?

The book has been praised for its thoughtful and articulate essays, with many appreciating Wood's ability to connect literature with deeper philosophical and ethical questions.

Can 'The Broken Estate' help readers better understand the role of literature in modern society?

Yes, the essays illuminate how literature interacts with belief systems and societal values, helping readers appreciate the ongoing relevance of literary works.

Additional Resources

The Broken Estate Essays on Literature and Belief Modern Library Paperbacks
James Wood: A Critical Review

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood stands as a significant contribution to contemporary literary criticism, offering a rigorous exploration of the complex interplay between literature and faith. This collection of essays, authored by James Wood, a preeminent literary critic, delves into the nuanced relationship between belief systems and literary form, unpacking how religion and spirituality influence narrative structures and thematic concerns in modern and classic literature. Published as part of the Modern Library Paperbacks series, this volume is not only a testament to Wood's incisive intellect but also a vital resource for readers interested in the intersection of literature, philosophy, and theology.

An In-Depth Analysis of The Broken Estate

James Wood's *The Broken Estate* engages with a spectrum of literary works and authors, ranging from canonical figures such as Henry James and George Eliot to more contemporary writers. The title itself metaphorically alludes to the fragmented nature of belief in the modern world and its repercussions on the literary imagination. Wood approaches his subject with a balance of scholarly rigor and accessible prose, making the essays suitable for both academic audiences and general readers who seek a deeper understanding of literature's spiritual dimensions.

The Modern Library Paperbacks edition is noteworthy for bringing this influential work to a broader audience, combining affordability with high editorial standards. The essays collectively argue that literature acts as a "broken estate" – a term Wood borrows from a historical reference to a fractured social order – reflecting the fractured, often conflicted state of belief in contemporary culture. Through close readings, Wood demonstrates that literature does not simply mirror religious faith or doubt but actively participates in shaping the discourse around belief.

Exploring the Intersection of Literature and Belief

One of the central themes in *The Broken Estate* is the tension between secularism and spirituality in literature. Wood investigates how authors grapple with the waning influence of organized religion while still acknowledging the enduring human desire for transcendence and moral order. His essays reveal that belief, whether orthodox or heterodox, remains a vital force in literary creation, influencing character development, narrative arcs, and ethical dilemmas.

Wood's approach is particularly effective in his examination of moral realism in fiction. He posits that belief systems, even when questioned or subverted, provide a framework for authors to engage with questions of good and evil, truth and falsehood. This is evident in his analysis of authors like Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, whose works are steeped in theological inquiry without resorting to dogmatism.

James Wood's Critical Style and Methodology

What distinguishes *The Broken Estate* in the landscape of literary criticism is Wood's commitment to close reading combined with philosophical inquiry. His essays are meticulously detailed, often drawing on stylistic nuances and narrative techniques to support broader thematic arguments. This method aligns with his reputation as one of the most influential contemporary critics, known for championing precision and attentiveness to language.

The Modern Library Paperbacks edition benefits from Wood's lucid style, which balances intellectual depth with clarity. Readers encounter essays that challenge easy categorizations, as Wood resists simplistic binaries such as "faith vs. reason" or "religion vs. art." Instead, he presents belief as a multifaceted, often contradictory force, integral to the literary enterprise.

Key Features and Themes in The Broken Estate

- **Interdisciplinary Approach:** Wood integrates literary analysis with philosophy, theology, and cultural criticism, providing a holistic view of literature's engagement with belief.
- **Diverse Authorial Range:** The essays cover a wide range of writers, from nineteenth-century novelists to twentieth-century modernists, illustrating the evolving dialogue between literature and faith.
- **Focus on Moral Realism:** A recurring motif is the exploration of how literature negotiates moral questions within a secularizing world.
- **Accessible Language:** Despite the complexity of the topics, Wood's prose remains approachable, making the book suitable for both scholars and general readers.

Comparative Context: The Broken Estate and Other Literary Criticism

In comparison to other works on literature and belief, such as Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* or Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence*, Wood's *The Broken Estate* is distinguished by its explicit focus on the fractured nature of contemporary belief. While Frye and Bloom emphasize archetypal patterns and intertextual tensions, respectively, Wood foregrounds the spiritual and ethical dimensions that often underpin narrative form.

Additionally, *The Broken Estate* occupies a unique position alongside Wood's other critical works, such as *How Fiction Works* and *The Nearest Thing to Life*. Together, these volumes showcase Wood's evolving preoccupation with the moral and philosophical stakes of fiction, with *The Broken Estate* specifically addressing the role of belief as both a thematic and structural element in literature.

Pros and Cons of The Broken Estate in Modern Library Paperbacks

- **Pros:**

- Comprehensive and insightful essays that bridge literature and belief effectively.
- Engaging and clear prose style that invites a wide readership.
- Rich interdisciplinary perspective that enhances understanding of complex themes.
- Modern Library Paperback format offers affordability and durability.

- **Cons:**

- Some essays may assume prior familiarity with certain literary works or theological concepts.
- The depth of analysis might be challenging for casual readers seeking lighter literary commentary.

The Enduring Relevance of The Broken Estate

As contemporary society continues to wrestle with questions of faith, secularism, and morality, James Wood's *The Broken Estate* remains a pertinent study of how literature reflects and refracts these ongoing concerns. The Modern Library Paperbacks edition ensures that this seminal work remains accessible to new generations of readers and scholars alike.

Wood's essays encourage a reconsideration of literature not merely as entertainment or aesthetic object but as a vital participant in cultural and spiritual discourse. By confronting the "broken estate" of belief, Wood invites readers to appreciate the complexity and subtlety with which literature navigates the uncertain terrain of human conviction and doubt.

In essence, *The Broken Estate Essays on Literature and Belief* Modern Library Paperbacks James Wood serves as a profound meditation on the power of fiction to engage with the deepest questions of human existence, making it a must-

read for anyone invested in the critical study of literature and its philosophical underpinnings.

The Broken Estate Essays On Literature And Belief Modern Library Paperbacks James Wood

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood: The Broken Estate James Wood, 2010-12-15 In a series of long essays, James Wood examines the connection between literature and religious belief, in a startlingly wide group of writers. Wood re-appraises the writing of such figures as Thomas More, Jane Austen, Herman Melville, Anton Chekhov, Thomas Mann, Nikolai Gogol, Gustave Flaubert and Virginia Woolf, vigorously reading them against the grain of received opinion, and illuminatingly relating them to questions of religious and philosophical belief. Contemporary writers, such as Martin Amis, Thomas Pynchon and George Steiner, are also discussed, with the boldness and attention to language that have made Wood such an influential and controversial figure. Writing here about his own childhood struggle to believe, Wood says that 'the child of evangelism, if he does not believe, inherits nevertheless a suspicion of indifference'. Wood brings that suspicion to bear on literature itself. The result is a unique book of criticism.

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood: The Book of Buechner W. Dale Brown, 2006-01-01 The most thorough and extensive investigation ever written on the much-beloved writer, *The Book of Buechner* explores the ways in which Frederick Buechner's writing, particularly his fiction, presents the possibilities of grace in the midst of the ambiguities of human existence and introduces themes of Christian faith. Both long-time readers and neophytes seeking a guide through his writings will delight in the illuminating analysis Dale Brown has to offer. Intelligent and gratifying, *The Book of Buechner* is a much overdue literary journey through one of the most significant American writers of the last fifty years.

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood: The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Pynchon Inger H. Dalsgaard, Luc Herman, Brian McHale, 2012 This essential Companion to Thomas Pynchon provides all the necessary tools to unlock the challenging fiction of this postmodern master.

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood: The Hidden Jane Austen John Wiltshire, 2014-04-24 This book reveals Austen's unique ability to penetrate the hidden inner motives of her characters through compelling new readings of her novels.

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood: The New York Times Book Reviews 2000 New York Times Staff, 2001 This anthology examines *Love's Labours Lost* from a variety of perspectives and through a wide range of materials. Selections discuss the play in terms of historical context, dating, and sources; character analysis; comic elements and verbal conceits; evidence of authorship; performance analysis; and feminist interpretations. Alongside theater reviews, production photographs, and critical commentary, the volume also includes essays written by practicing theater artists who have worked on the play. An index by name, literary work, and concept rounds out this valuable resource.

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood: Becoming John Updike Laurence W. Mazzeno, 2013 When John Updike died in 2009, tributes from the literary establishment were immediate and fulsome. However, no one reading reviews of Updike's work in the late 1960s would have predicted that kind of praise for a man who was known then as a brilliant stylist who had nothing to say. What changed? Why? And what is likely to be his

legacy? These are the questions that *Becoming John Updike* pursues by examining the journalistic and academic response to his writings. Several things about Updike's career make a reception study appropriate. First, he was prolific: he began publishing fiction and essays in 1956, published his first book in 1958, and from then on, brought out at least one new book each year. Second, his books were reviewed widely - usually in major American newspapers and magazines, and often in foreign ones as well. Third, Updike quickly became a darling of academics; the first book about his work was published in 1967, less than a decade after his own first book. More than three dozen books and hundreds of articles of academic criticism have been devoted to Updike. The present volume will appeal to the continuing interest in Updike's writing among academics and general readers alike. Laurence W. Mazzeno is President Emeritus of Alvernia University. Among other books, he has written volumes on Austen, Dickens, Tennyson, and Matthew Arnold for Camden House's *Literary Criticism in Perspective* series.

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wood: *Three Sons* Daniel L. Medin, 2010-01-11 Franz Kafka was a self-conscious writer whose texts were highly if mysteriously autobiographical. Three giants of contemporary fiction—J. M. Coetzee, Philip Roth, and W. G. Sebald—have all acknowledged their debt to the work of Kafka, both in interviews and in their own academic essays and articles for a general readership about him. In this striking feat of literary scholarship, Daniel Medin finds that the use of Kafka by Coetzee, Roth, and Sebald is similarly self-reflexive and autobiographical. That writers from such divergent national and ethnic traditions can have such unique critical readings of Kafka, and that Kafka could exert such a powerful influence over their oeuvres, Medin contends, attests to the central place of Kafka in the contemporary literary imagination.

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wood: *Literary Secularism* Amardeep Singh, 2008-12-18 *Literary Secularism: Religion and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Fiction* shows the path to secularization in the modern novel in comparative perspective. Writers as diverse as George Eliot, James Joyce, Salman Rushdie, Orhan Pamuk, Taslima Nasrin, and James Wood, have all struggled with religious orthodoxy in their personal lives, and are some of the most important and representative secular writers in the modern world canon. But their novels, which are far more than mere anti-religious manifestos, directly reflect the continued power of religious communities and institutions in the modern world. While religion is in a very real sense displaced from epistemological centrality in modernity, all of these writers suggest that religious texts, rituals, and communities have a force that is, in George Eliot's words, "still throbbing" in modern life. In a series of close readings, *Literary Secularism* argues that the intimate, often deeply ambivalent representation of religion is a key feature of modern writing and is central to the larger intellectual and historical project of modernity. *Literary Secularism* is then a complex literary ethos, which impinges as much on style, language, and novelistic form as on theme. The close readings here of novels such as George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*, Rabindranath Tagore's *Gora*, James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* all hinge on the ambiguity of religious and secular discourses. In some cases, the ambiguity is expressed through the affective and embodied experience of the protagonists, whose private subjectivity often conflicts with their public identities. The conflict between present and private is also explored in a dedicated chapter on secularism and feminism in India, as well as with regard to the global crisis of secularism that has emerged following the terrorist attacks of 9/11. While the particular experiences of the various narratives vary somewhat from author to author, all of the authors in this study are interested in defining a way of being secular that no sociological or ideological formula can fully describe. Correspondingly, while works of literature are certainly artifacts marking key moments in the history of secularisation, literature by itself doesn't produce secularism in either the cultural or the political context. In arguing for the literary as a historically-specific social and cultural mode of secularity, *Literary Secularism* offers a unique perspective on the problem of secularisation that may be of interest to fields such as literary criticism, religious studies, the sociology of religion, and political theory.

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wood: The Rise Sarah Lewis, 2014-03-04 It is one of the enduring enigmas of the human experience: many of our most iconic, creative endeavors--from Nobel Prize-winning discoveries to entrepreneurial inventions and works in the arts--are not achievements but conversions, corrections after failed attempts. The gift of failure is a riddle. Like the number zero, it will always be both a void and the start of infinite possibility. *The Rise*--a soulful celebration of the determination and courage of the human spirit--makes the case that many of our greatest triumphs come from understanding the importance of this mystery. This exquisite biography of an idea is about the improbable foundations of creative human endeavor. *The Rise* begins with narratives about figures past and present who range from writers to entrepreneurs; Frederick Douglass, Samuel F. B. Morse, and J. K. Rowling, for example, feature alongside choreographer Paul Taylor, Nobel Prize-winning physicists Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov, Arctic explorer Ben Saunders, and psychology professor Angela Duckworth. *The Rise* explores the inestimable value of often ignored ideas--the power of surrender for fortitude, the criticality of play for innovation, the propulsion of the near win on the road to mastery, and the importance of grit and creative practice. -- Publisher's description.

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wood: Governing the Tongue in Northern Ireland Shane Alcobia-Murphy, 2008-12-11 How free is the Northern Irish writer to produce even a short poem when every word will be scrutinised for its political subtext? Is the visual artist compelled to react to the latest atrocity? Must the creative artist be aware of his or her own inculcated prejudices and political affiliations, and must these be revealed overtly in the artwork? Because of these and other related questions, the recent work by Northern Irish writers and visual artists has been characterised by an inward-looking self-consciousness. It is an art that relays its personal responses in guarded, often coded ways. Characterised by obliquity and self-reflexivity, the art does not simply re-present events and the artist's emotive response towards them; rather, it calls attention to the manner of its presentation. It is an art about art, and its role and place in society. *Governing the Tongue* examines how the creation of art in a time of violence brings about an anxiety in the Northern Irish artist regarding his or her artistic role, and how it calls into question the ability to represent events. The series of essays is inter-disciplinary in its approach, exploring the place of art - its role and location - in the work of key Northern Irish writers (Ciaran Carson, Seamus Deane, Brian Friel, Seamus Heaney, Michael Longley, Medbh McGuckian, Eoin McNamee, Glenn Patterson) and visual artists (Willie Doherty, Rita Donagh, Paul Seawright, Victor Sloan).

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wood: The Collar Sue Sorensen, 2014-06-11 Combining thematic analysis and stimulating close readings, *The Collar* is a wide-ranging study of the many ways--heroic or comic, shrewd or dastardly--Christian ministers have been represented in literature and film. Since all Christians are expected to be involved in ministry of some type, the assumptions of secular culture about ministers affect more than just clergy. Ranging across several nations (particularly the U. S., Britain, and Canada), denominations, and centuries, *The Collar* aims to encourage creative and faithful responses to the challenges of Christian leadership and to provoke awareness of the times when leadership expectations become too extreme. Using the framework of novels, plays, TV, and movies to make inquiries about pastoral passion, frustration, and fallibility, Sue Sorensen's well-informed, sprightly, and perceptive book will be helpful to pastors, parishioners, those interested in practical theology, and anyone who enjoys evocative literature and film.

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wood: Tess of the d'Urbervilles Thomas Hardy, 2001 Etched against the background of a dying rural society, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* was Thomas Hardy's 'bestseller,' and Tess Durbeyfield remains his most striking and tragic heroine. Of all the characters he created, she meant the most to him. Hopelessly torn between two men--Alec d'Urberville, a wealthy, dissolute young man who seduces her in a lonely wood, and Angel Clare, her provincial, moralistic, and unforgiving husband--Tess escapes from her vise of passion through a horrible, desperate act. 'Like the greatest characters in

literature, Tess lives beyond the final pages of the book as a permanent citizen of the imagination,' said Irving Howe. 'In Tess he stakes everything on his sensuous apprehension of a young woman's life, a girl who is at once a simple milkmaid and an archetype of feminine strength. . . . Tess is that rare creature in literature: goodness made interesting.' Now Tess of the d'Urbervilles has been brought to television in a magnificent new co-production from A&E Network and London Weekend Television. Justine Waddell (Anna Karenina) stars as the tragic heroine, Tess; Oliver Milburn (Chandler & Co.) is Angel Clare; and Jason Flemyng is Alec d'Urberville. The cast also includes John McEnery (Black Beauty) as Jack Durbeyfield and Lesley Dunlop (The Elephant Man) as Joan Durbeyfield. Tess of the d'Urbervilles is directed by Ian Sharp and produced by Sarah Wilson, with a screenplay by Ted Whitehead; it was filmed in Hardy country, the beautiful English countryside in Dorset where Thomas Hardy set his novels.

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood: *Shakespiritualism* J. Kahan, 2013-02-27 This study concerns itself with a now-forgotten religious group, Spiritualists, and how their ensuing discussions of Shakespeare's meaning, his writing practices, his possible collaborations, and the supposed purity and/or corruption of his texts anticipated, accompanied, or silhouetted similar debates in Shakespeare Studies.

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood: *Restless Secularism* Matthew Mutter, 2017-01-01 Cover -- Half Title -- Title -- Copyright -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- List of Abbreviations -- Introduction: Modernist Secularism and Its Discontents -- ONE: The World Was Paradise Malformed: Poetic Language, Anthropomorphism, and Secularism in Wallace Stevens -- TWO: Tangled in a Golden Mesh: Virginia Woolf and the Deceptiveness of Beauty -- THREE: Homer Is My Example: Yeats, Paganism, and the Emotions -- FOUR: The Power to Enchant That Comes from Disillusion: W.H. Auden's Anti-Magical Poetics -- Conclusion: Evil and the Adequacy of the Earth -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Credits -- Index -- A -- B -- C -- D -- E -- F -- G -- H -- I -- J -- K -- L -- M -- N -- O -- P -- R -- S -- T -- U -- V -- W -- Y

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood: *Modes of Faith* Theodore Ziolkowski, 2008-11-15 In the decades surrounding World War I, religious belief receded in the face of radical new ideas such as Marxism, modern science, Nietzschean philosophy, and critical theology. Modes of Faith addresses both this decline of religious belief and the new modes of secular faith that took religion's place in the minds of many writers and poets. Theodore Ziolkowski here examines the motives for this embrace of the secular, locating new modes of faith in art, escapist travel, socialism, politicized myth, and utopian visions. James Joyce, he reveals, turned to art as an escape while Hermann Hesse made a pilgrimage to India in search of enlightenment. Other writers, such as Roger Martin du Gard and Thomas Mann, sought temporary solace in communism or myth. And H. G. Wells, Ziolkowski argues, took refuge in utopian dreams projected in another dimension altogether. Rooted in innovative and careful comparative reading of the work of writers from France, England, Germany, Italy, and Russia, Modes of Faith is a critical masterpiece by a distinguished literary scholar that offers an abundance of insight to anyone interested in the human compulsion to believe in forces that transcend the individual.

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood: *A Mirror in the Roadway* Morris Dickstein, 2007-02-25 In this collection of essays, Morris Dickstein focuses on the rich interchange of ideas between writers such as Kafka, Céline, Carver, Bellow & Kennedy, and the world around them: the lives that formed them, the places they write about, & the social changes they make indelibly real to us.

the broken estate essays on literature and belief modern library paperbacks james wood: *Jonah's Arguments with God* T A Perry, 2022-05-03 In this refreshing and thoughtful interpretation of the biblical book of Jonah, T. A. Perry seeks to recover the book's prophetic thrust: how Jonah is cast out from the divine Presence and works his way back—like Elijah—in a love story of rejection and reconciliation. This book explores the role reversal of Eternity and Jonah and suggests the possibility that God can not only change his mind, but even be educated.

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wood: Formal Revolution in the Work of Baudelaire and Flaubert Kathryn Oliver Mills, 2012-03-22

In *Formal Revolution in the Work of Baudelaire and Flaubert*, Kathryn Oliver Mills argues that despite the enduring celebrity of Baudelaire and Flaubert, their significance to modern art has been miscast and misunderstood. To date, literary criticism has paid insufficient attention to these authors' literary form and their socio-cultural context. In addition, critical literature has not always adequately integrated individual works to each author's broader oeuvre: on the one hand critics do not often maintain rigorous distinctions among texts when discussing Baudelaire and Flaubert, and on the other hand scholars of Baudelaire and Flaubert have not consistently considered the relationship of individual texts to either writer's corpus. Furthermore, critical focus has been on the modernity of *Les Fleurs du mal*, *Madame Bovary*, and *L'Education Sentimentale*. Addressing these lacunae in scholarship, Mills puts forth the argument that Baudelaire's collection of prose poems, *Le Spleen de Paris*, and Flaubert's short, poetic tales, *Trois contes*, best embody the modern aesthetic that Baudelaire develops in *Le Peintre de la vie moderne* and that Flaubert elaborates in his correspondence. *Formal Revolution* places these relatively less well-known but last published works in relationship with the artistic goals of their authors, showing that Baudelaire and Flaubert were both acutely aware of the need to launch a new form of literature in order to literally "come to terms with" the dramatic changes transforming the nineteenth-century into the Modern Age. More specifically, *Formal Revolution* demonstrates that for Baudelaire and Flaubert the formal project of fusing prose with poetry—as poetic prose in the case of Flaubert, as poetry in prose in the case of Baudelaire—was crucial to their mission of "painting modern life." This work concludes that experimentation with literary form represents these two seminal writers' major legacy to modernity; suggests that the twentieth-century might have gone too far down that road; and speculates about the future direction of literature. The modernity of Baudelaire and Flaubert, still relevant today but often taken for granted, needs to be reexamined in light of the cultural, formal, and contextual considerations that inform *Formal Revolution in the Work of Baudelaire and Flaubert*.

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wood: The New Pragmatism Alan Malachowski, 2014-12-05 Some hundred years after its inception, Pragmatism has reclaimed centre stage, not just within philosophy, but also within intellectual culture as a whole. This book sets out to explain what it is about Pragmatism that makes it such a distinctively attractive prospect to so many thinkers, even in previously hostile traditions. Alan Malachowski sets out in a clear and accessible manner the original guiding thoughts behind the Pragmatist approach to philosophy and examines how these thoughts have fared in the hands of those largely responsible for the present revival (Putnam and Rorty). The Pragmatism that emerges from this exploration of its classic and new wave forms is then assessed in terms of both its philosophical potential and its wider cultural contribution. Readers will emerge from the book with a more secure grip on what Pragmatism involves and a correspondingly clearer grasp of what it has to offer and what its current resurgence is all about.

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earlier explorations of middle America, while *The Witches of Eastwick* and related novels are variations on Nathaniel Hawthorne's nineteenth-century classic *The Scarlet Letter*. His number-one best seller *Couples* examines what *Time* magazine called the adulterous society in the last year of the Kennedy administration, following the nation's fall from idealism into self-centeredness. Understanding John Updike will give both new readers and those already familiar with the author a firm grasp of his literary achievement. This outline of Updike's professional career highlights his importance in the life of the nation—not only as a novelist but also as a gifted essayist, reviewer, cultural critic, and poet.

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